

Important Hurricane Telephone Numbers

Report power outages to FPL: 1-800-468-8243

Palm Beach County Emergency Managers
(561) 712-6400

Hearing Impaired (TTY/TTD): (561) 712-6343
www.pbcgov.com/pubsafety/eoc/

Red Cross of Palm Beach County: (561) 833-7711
www.redcross-pbc.org

Sheriff Department (non-emergency): (561) 688-3000

Palm Beach County School Board: (561) 357-7500
www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us

Palm Beach Co. Animal Care & Control: (561) 233-1200

Disabled Transportation Assistance: (561) 649-9848

Special Care Shelter: (561) 712-6400
Emergency Medical Services: (561) 712-6400

Department of Financial Services
Storm Hotline: (800) 227-8676

FEMA: (800) 621-3362
Hearing impaired: (800) 462-7585

**Residents with questions before, during and
after a hurricane should call 211.**

District Office:
2240 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
Suite 102
West Palm Beach, FL 33409

District Phone:
(561) 682-0156
(561) 682-0158 (fax)

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West Palm Beach, FL 33409

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District 88 Update 2006

From The Florida House Of Representatives

Dear Friends:

The 2006 Legislative Session has ended and it is great to be back in our community. This year, the Legislature was able to pass an unprecedented \$71.3 billion budget.

During this session, I supported increased funding for hurricane shelters and relief and mitigation efforts. Additionally, \$250 million was provided in mitigation funds to provide no interest loans for Floridians who wish to retrofit their homes to better withstand future hurricanes.

Unfortunately, the Legislature did not provide adequate funding for KidCare, the state's health insurance program for children. In 2004, changes were made to the KidCare program that some of my colleagues and I opposed. Since these changes went into effect, KidCare has lost more than 100,000 children in the program. During debate, I urged the Legislature to create more outreach initiatives to help make Floridians aware of this great program. KidCare allows working families to purchase health insurance for their children at a lower cost. The Legislature opposed this call to expand the program and instead cut funding for KidCare by \$159 million, reducing the number of parents who can purchase health insurance for their children through this program.

One success this session was the defeat of the proposal to gut the Class Size Amendment and to expand vouchers. Eminent domain legislation was also passed that will protect the property rights of Florida homeowners.

It is an honor to serve you in the Florida House of Representatives. I urge you to contact my office if there is anything I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Susan Bucher



On The Inside: Property Insurance Reform • Campaign Finance Reform



Property Insurance Reform: The Struggle Continues

Florida's property insurance market crisis has reached new levels. The aftermath of eight hurricanes and an insurance market severely bruised had the Florida Legislature searching for solutions to bring stability back to the market.

Some of my colleagues and I advocated for a statewide hurricane insurance fund, similar to the national flood insurance model. This would remove a majority of the risk from private insurance companies, encouraging competition and reducing premiums for Florida homeowners. Additionally, our solution would have stabilized the hurricane insurance market and prevented the drastic premium increases and assessments Floridians will be forced to pay.

Unfortunately, the Legislature passed legislation that does little to reform our insurance market. The plan that passed paved the way for insurance companies to raise rates with less regulation from the Office of Insurance Regulation. The plan also removed important consumer protections. I opposed this plan, because I do not believe the solution to the insurance crisis is to make it easier for insurance companies to raise rates.

The Legislature had many choices to solving the hurricane insurance crisis, and I am disappointed that we did not choose a long-term, common-sense plan to return stable rates to Floridians. Next year, I will work with my colleagues to limit the risk on the backs of private insurance companies and stabilize rates for Floridians.



The Importance Of Campaign Finance Reform

This past session, some of my colleagues and I fought to limit special interest influence in Tallahassee. We unveiled our historic legislation to further curb the influence of money in politics.

Our legislation was designed to close the gaping loophole in current law that allows elected officials to receive unlimited money through personal political funds.

While Senate Bill 6A (passed in December 2005) prohibited elected officials from receiving food, drink or "anything of value" from lobbyists, it did nothing to stop members from accepting checks through the political funds they control, commonly either Committees of Continuous Existence (CCE's) or 527's (named for the Internal Revenue Service tax law chapter they fall under). Some of my colleagues and I thought this didn't make any sense.

We believe the issue is simple. If elected officials can't take a muffin, they shouldn't be able to take a bucket full of cash. The public expects that special interests should not have more influence than constituents, and this legislation would have stopped the use of these funds by elected officials and candidates.

Unfortunately, the Legislature did not support our proposal to restrict these unlimited political funds. I will continue to try to close this loophole in the future.